

# Singapore's Education Concept : Comparative and Applicative Study to The Quality of Indonesia's Education

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**Abstract.** Education is one of the most important components in life. Since man started educating themselves, since then man has managed to realize a wide range of development and progress in every part of their lives. In order to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, the government continues to make various reforms in the education sector. Indonesia's education system has advantages and disadvantages compared to other countries. Comparative studies of education systems is one way to find out various aspects related to the Indonesian education system with certain countries, especially those related to the advantages and disadvantages that occur in the education system. For this reason, on this occasion the author tries to review and describe the comparison of education between Indonesia and Singapore.

**Keywords:** Education, Curriculum

## 1. Introduction

Education is a very important and inseparable thing from one's life be it in family, society and nation. The progress of a nation is determined by the level of success of education. Indonesia as a developing country requires reliable human resources. Indonesia's human development is basically the implementation of the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Act.

The development of education in Indonesia has undergone considerable changes. This is caused by changes in the way of life that occurs in the country and abroad. Of course these changes are also experienced by other countries, such as changes in the education, economic, social, political and cultural systems. Therefore, Indonesians need to prepare themselves so that they are not left behind by other countries.

Based on the reports published by the World Economic Forum, the ranking of the quality of the education system in Indonesia ranks 54th with a score of 4.3, lagging behind 31 levels from our neighboring country, Malaysia which is ranked 23rd and further from Singapore with scores 6.1 points which ranks 4th, and the highest in Asia. Singapore recorded a very high score in the International Student Assessment Program (PISA) test where the test aims to measure and compare the performance of students throughout the world. Therefore the author decided to compare the Singapore and Indonesian education systems.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Education**

Education is a process of change to attitudes and behavior of a person or group and is an effort to mature people through teaching and training. The higher a person's education, the more they can accept and understand information so that the knowledge they possess is also getting higher. According to Siagian education is the whole process of techniques and methods of teaching and learning in order to transfer a knowledge from someone to others in accordance with the standards has been established. As stated by Sedarmayanti that through education, a person is prepared to have the provision to be ready to know, recognize and develop methods of systematic thinking in order to solve problems that will be faced in life in the future.

From several definitions of education above, it can be concluded that education is any effort that promotes the emergence of inner strength and character that is done to prepare students to be able to develop their full potential in facing challenges in the future. In general, people who have a higher education, formal or informal will have greater insight, especially in the appreciation of the importance of productivity. The high awareness of the importance of productivity encourages the relevant workforce to take productive actions.

### **2.2. Curriculum**

Curriculum is a plan that provides guidance in the process of teaching and learning activities. Curriculum is understood as a set of plans and arrangements regarding the purpose, content, and material of learning and the methods used as guidelines for the implementation of learning activities to achieve certain educational goals<sup>5</sup>.

Curriculum has four components, namely the objective component, curriculum content, methods or strategies for achieving objectives and evaluation components. In a curriculum contains a goal to be achieved in an education system. For that purpose curriculum plays a very important role, because the purpose of directing all teaching activities and supporting other educational components.

In the dimensions of curriculum management, coherence is needed between the curriculum and learning carried out in educational institutions, namely: First, the curriculum rests on the purpose or goal of the curriculum - the objectives to be achieved. Second, the curriculum is based on a point of view based on the curriculum context used. Third, the curriculum is at a strategic point of view on the development of the chosen curriculum. Development also cannot be separated from the process, the learning strategy chosen, the learning techniques used. That is the other side of the curriculum view as a process.

## **3. Research Methods**

To obtain a study that is relevant to the theme of the subject and to facilitate the understanding and direction of writing in accordance with the problems in the title, the

author collects in a list that uses the methodology tool and analyzes all collected data. The methodological tools in question are:

### ***3.1. Research Type***

This research is a qualitative research, according to Lexy J. Moleong who cites Bogdan Taylor's opinion that qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from people and observable behavior.

In accordance with the above definition, Krik and Miller define that qualitative research is a particular tradition in social science that is fundamentally dependent on observing humans in their own area and relating to these people in their discussion and terminology.

This research is purely library research because all data is obtained through books and journals. The study of texts according to Noeng Muhadjir includes: First, the theoretical study of a scientific discipline that needs to be continued empirically to obtain the truth empirically. Second, studies that attempt to study all research objects philosophically or theoretically and related to validity. Third, studies that attempt to study linguistic theorists. Fourth, is the study of literature. The research is closer to the first type of literature study where this study seeks to examine the comparison of Indonesian education with Singapore.

### ***3.2. Source and Type of Data***

What is meant by data sources in research is the subject where the data was obtained. The sources and types of data used in this study were collected from the following data sources:

Primary data: The primary data source is the first source where a data is generated. Primary data in this study are Reports of Educational Progress and Status by Various International Organizations and Information and Laws Released Directly By the Countries Themselves.

Secondary Data: Data that has been previously collected and reported by people outside of the investigator himself even though the actual data collected is genuine. In other words, secondary data can be interpreted as data that will be analyzed by the author from indirect sources, for example : Papers or Journals from previous researchers and also sources originated from the internet that can be used as additional material to obtain data as a supplement.

### ***3.3. Data Collection Techniques***

In this study the data collection techniques used were Documentary techniques. Documentary techniques are ways to collect data through written relics such as archives, and include books about opinions, theories, laws and others related to research problems. In qualitative research this technique is the main data collection tool.

## 4. Results and Discussions

### 4.1. Education in Singapore

The Singapore education system aims to provide basic and religious knowledge for students. To unite the diversity of racial and cultural differences in Singapore, the diversity of languages, each student learns English as a daily language. Students also learn their Mother Language (China, Malaysia and Tamil / Thailand) to help them maintain their national identity, culture, heritage and values.

Formal education in Singapore starts from the Kindergarten School or is equivalent to Kindergarten (TK) in Indonesia. After graduating from the Kindergarten School, students continue to go to Primary School or equivalent to Elementary School (SD) in Indonesia for six years. To get to a higher level of education, students must take Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE). Then education is continued to the Secondary School level for four or five years. Secondary School is divided into four lines. Special / Express Course, Normal (Academic) Course, Normal (Technical) Course, and Integrated Program (IP) Course. The Special / Express Course is four years of education which ends with Singapore Cambridge General Certificate of Education (GCE) 'O' Level Examination. In this pathway, students learn English and Mother Language, Mathematics, Science and Culture (Social). Schools are permitted to offer Applied Grade Subjects (AGS) in addition to or substitute for curriculum to offer students various choices. AGS generally invites students to practice or be oriented towards education such as polytechnics.

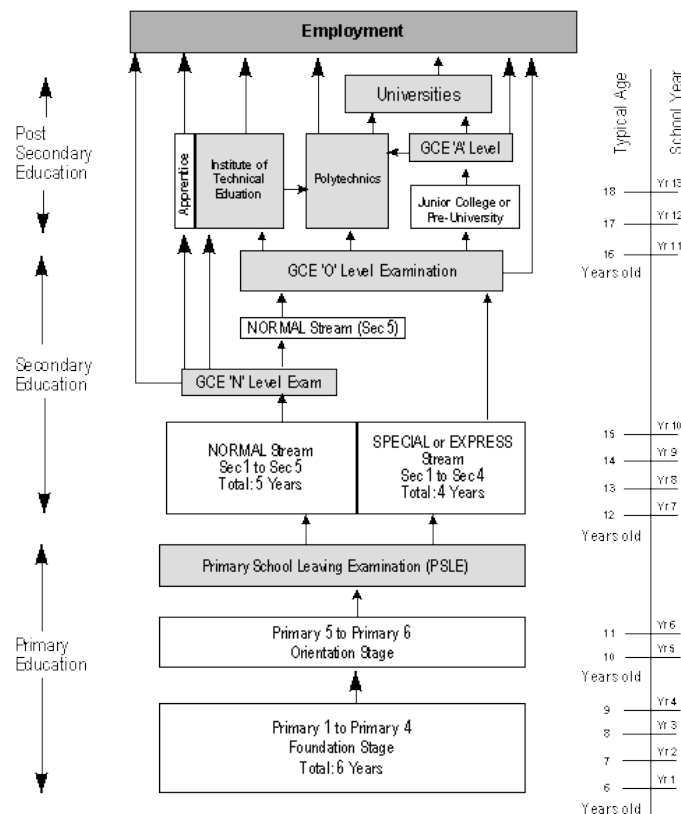


Figure 1. Singapore Education System

#### **4.2. Singapore's Management of Education**

The progress of education in Singapore is supported by many factors. Among them are the presence of adequate facilities. For example, every school in Singapore has free internet access. Each school also has a school website that is useful for connecting students, teachers, and parents. In addition, there is Liquid in each class Crystal Display (LCD) for the learning process. Another facility is the availability of a transportation system that has access to all schools in Singapore which makes it easy for students to go to school. Cost factors also greatly affect the quality of education. Because if school fees are cheap, everyone in the country can get an education easily. In Singapore, the cost of education is adjusted to the capabilities of the people, plus scholarships for disadvantaged people. Another factor that causes Singapore to become the country with the best education system in ASEAN is the educator factor. The screening process to become a teacher is very strict and the prospective teacher received is adjusted to the number of teachers needed, so that all prospective teachers will definitely get a job. After auditioning, the teacher candidates were given training before work, so that the teachers had already received debriefing. In addition, the salary given to teachers in Singapore is also high. That caused the lives of the teachers to be assured of their welfare.

#### **4.3. Education in Indonesia**

The level of education is the stage of education that is applied based on the level of development of students, goals to be achieved and capabilities that will be developed. According to Act No. 20 of 2003 article 14, the level of formal education in Indonesia consists of :

1. Elementary School (SD) or Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) is the most basic level in formal education in Indonesia. Primary school is taken within 6 years, starting from grade 1 to grade 6.
2. Middle School (SMP) or Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTS) is the level of basic education in formal education in Indonesia after graduating from elementary school (or equivalent). Middle school is taken within 3 years.
3. Senior High School (SMA) or Madrasah Aliyah (MA) is a secondary education level in formal education in Indonesia after graduating from junior high school (or equivalent). High school is taken within 3 years.
4. Vocational High School (SMK) is a form of formal education unit that provides vocational education at the secondary education level as a continuation of junior high school, MTs, or other forms of equivalent or continued learning outcomes that are recognized as equal / equivalent to junior high / MTs. Vocational Schools are often referred to as STM (Intermediate Technical Schools). In Vocational Schools, there are many Vocational Programs.
5. Vocational School Madrasah Aliyah (MAK) is a form of formal education unit under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion which organizes vocational education with Islamic distinctiveness in secondary education as a continuation of junior high schools, MTs, or other forms of equivalent or continued learning outcomes that are recognized / equivalent to SMP / MTs.

6. Higher education is an education unit that organizes higher education. Universities and equivalent are under this category.

**Table 1.** Indonesia Education System

Grade	Age
<u>Kindergarten</u>	
Playgroup	4
Group A	5
Group B	6
<u>Elementary School</u>	
Grade 1	7
Grade 2	8
Grade 3	9
Grade 4	10
Grade 5	11
Grade 6	12
<u>Middle School</u>	
Grade 7	13
Grade 8	14
Grade 9	15
<u>High School</u>	
Grade 10	16
Grade 11	17
Grade 12	18
<u>University</u>	
<u>Bachelor</u>	various ages (for approximately 4 years)
<u>Master</u>	various ages (for approximately 2 years)
<u>Doctorate</u>	various ages (for approximately 2 years)

#### **4.4. Indonesia's Management of Education**

Speaking about the management of education in Indonesia today, we will be shown a standard, sustainable institution, where the teaching and learning process is held. A place to educate youth as a successor to the ideals of the nation's struggle, a place where the children of the nation walk the first step in reaching their dreams. They are the next generation in the development of the nation and state. The continuation of national development will be largely determined by the development and growth of children as the next generation.

The current state of education in Indonesia still has several obstacles related to the quality of education, including the limited access to education, the number of teachers who are not evenly distributed, and the quality of the teachers themselves is considered to be lacking. The limited access to education in Indonesia, especially in the remote regions, has led to increasing urbanization to gain better access to education in large cities.

We can see the inequality of education in Indonesia from how the education managed today. We do not often see the development of the education system, it is still using a centralized level and curriculum even though it is very clear that the large area and high population of Indonesia make the system overwhelmed.

Not only that, human resources in education must also be considered. Teachers are currently not good at understanding the context of learning and teaching, and always

assume that their job is only to teach and carry out their routines as teachers, it will be difficult to make education in Indonesia to head to a better direction.

## 5. Conclusion

There are some striking differences between Singapore and Indonesia's educational curriculums and systems. The first difference is the level of junior high and high school combined and becomes a shorter one to two years in Singapore. This provides a clearer education classification than in Indonesia. The next differences are the Singapore curriculum which has a higher level of difficulty, sophisticated facilities, and qualified teaching staff.

Most of Indonesia's problems are actually because compared to Singapore, Indonesia has a much larger area and population. This is what causes educational inequality and resulting in the accumulation of quality students and schools in large cities only.

Various solutions can be provided such as improvements in educational workforce both from the administration and the instructors. Then the distribution of infrastructure and educational support facilities. Besides that we as a community also must assist in the process for support programs that can advance education in Indonesia especially in the management of education in Indonesia.

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